

CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN UPDATE 2009
CALIFORNIA TRIBAL WATER SUMMIT PLANNING TEAM
Highlights from Inaugural Meeting, December 12, 2008, in Sacramento

The inaugural meeting of the California Tribal Water Summit Planning Team was held in Sacramento on December 12, 2008. The meeting's objective was to discuss the concept of a Tribal Water Summit and develop potential structures for such an event.

Work to Date

Barbara Cross, Tribal Liaison for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), provided an overview of the California Water Plan Update 2009 process, the work of the Tribal Communication Committee, and early discussions about a Tribal Water Summit.

In preparation for their discussion, the Team reviewed the results of a survey of the major water concerns of Tribes, and a presentation on different kinds of State summits and examples of Tribal water summits from the United States and Canada.

Summit Discussion

The Planning Team then had an extended discussion about possible Summit elements and formats. It was agreed that the process of building to the Summit needs to engage as many Tribes as possible, as well as their issues. It was suggested that the Team should look at options to piggyback on existing conferences in order to bolster participation. It was agreed that Tribes have diverse concerns, and therefore it will be important to have regional Tribal water plenary meetings to identify place-based issues and conditions. It was agreed that partners, whether Tribes, Tribal organizations, or State agencies, could provide many kinds of valuable support. It was noted that an important component of planning would include thinking about how to evaluate the success of the Summit process.

The major conclusions of the Planning Team included:

- (1) A statewide summit will be held in 2009, likely in August or September, and will focus on two days of activities. The Team did not want to postpone the Summit to a future year, even if materials for a Government-to-Government session were not ready for the 2009 Summit. The proceedings will be included in the California Water Plan Update 2009.
- (2) A 2009 Summit, if done well, would provide a solid foundation for building the critical relationships with State agencies and senior state officials necessary to have a Government-to-Government session in the future. The 2009 Summit may be the first in a series of California Tribal Water Summits that take place every few years.
- (3) A series of regional meetings in the first part of 2009 would build momentum and interest in the Summit, and help clarify what topics should be addressed in order to garner broad participation by California Native American Tribes.

Team members also identified several concrete goals for the Summit, including things like exploring common interests, educating State and other officials, highlighting successes, educating and training Tribes, drafting some kind of declaration, and increasing the visibility of Tribal water concerns.